

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 201583
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SUBJECT: WEEKLY STATUS REPORT - VIETNAM, LAOS AND CAMBODIA

1. REGIONAL

A. SRV-CAMBODIAN BORDER RHETORIC (UNCL)

VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA CONTINUE TO SHAKE VERBAL STICKS AT EACH OTHER OVER THE BORDER AND TERRITORIAL WATERS ISSUE. VIETNAMESE POLITBURO MEMBER GENERAL CHU HUY MAN, SPEAKING TO VIETNAMESE NAVY PERSONNEL IN HANOI AUGUST 15-16, INSTRUCTED THE NAVY "TO RAISE FURTHER THEIR FIGHTING STRENGTH AND COMBAT-READINESS IN ORDER TO DEFEND THE SEA AREAS, OFF-SHORE ISLANDS, CONTINENTAL SHELF AND ALL RESOURCES ON, IN AND UNDER THE SEAS OF THE FATHERLAND." MEANWHILE POLITBURO
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PAGE 02 STATE 201583

MEMBER GENERAL VO NGUYEN GIAP, VISITING DALAT IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS, SPOKE TO CORPS COMMANDERS ABOUT ECONOMIC CONSTRUCTION AND NATIONAL DEFENSE.

NOT TO BE OUT DONE, CAMBODIAN RADIO AUGUST 21 PRAISED THE ACTIVITIES OF PEASANTS IN THE KAMPOT SECTOR (BORDERING VIETNAM AND THE SEA) WHO ARE CONSTANTLY MAINTAINING HIGH

VIGILANCE "IN ORDER TO DEFEND OUR LAND, SEA, ISLANDS AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AT ALL TIMES AND TO ALLOW NO ENEMY

TO INVADE OR INFRINGE UPON OUR TERRITORY AT WILL." THERE HAVE BEEN PREVIOUS CAMBODIAN PUBLIC REFERENCES TO THE KAMPOT SECTOR, WHERE REFUGEES HAVE REPORTED BORDER FIGHTING WITH VIETNAMESE FORCES IN MAY AND JUNE OF THIS YEAR. OTHER RECENT CAMBODIAN RADIO BROADCASTS HAVE PRAISED THE VIGILANCE OF THE PEOPLE AND REVOLUTIONARY ARMY IN MONDOLKIRI AND RATANAKIRI SECTORS, ALSO ON THE SRV/CAMBODIAN BORDER.

2. LAOS

A. IMF TEAM TO VISIT LAOS (CONF)

A 4-MAN IMF TEAM HEADED BY SOUTHEAST ASIA DIVISION CHIEF PAUL CHABRIER IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN VIENTIANE FROM BANGKOK ABOUT AUGUST 26 FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH LAO OFFICIALS ON THE CONDITIONS THE IMF WOULD SET BEFORE RELEASING MORE CREDIT TO THE LAO GOVERNMENT. (THE LAO DREW ON IMF CREDITS IN L975 AND L976). ONE TEAM MEMBER HAS EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT THE LAO GOVERNMENT WILL ACCEPT THE NECESSARY UNDERTAKINGS TO GET MORE IMF CREDITS. THE IMF TEAM HAS JUST COMPLETED A SIMILAR VISIT TO HANOI.

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PAGE 03 STATE 201583

B. LAO CHARGE COMPLETES SEMINAR (CONF)

LAO CHARGE D'AFFAIRES TO THE UNITED STATES SOMPHONG VANITSAVETH IS SCHEDULED TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON THIS WEEK AFTER MORE THAN TWO MONTHS OF "SEMINAR" IN LAOS. WE HAVE NO INDICATION WHEN THE LAO PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN VITHAYA SOURINHO, ALSO STUDYING AT HOME, WILL BE RETURNING TO POST.

C. VISIT OF KENNEDY SUBCOMMITTEE STAFFERS TO VIENTIANE (CONF)

JERRY TINKER AND DALE DEHAAN, STAFF MEMBERS OF THE (KENNEDY) SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION, VISITED VIENTIANE AUGUST 19-21. THEY MET WITH THE CHEFS DE CABINET OF THE LAO MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND HEALTH AND WITH OTHER LAO AND UN OFFICIALS.

DEL HAD LEARNED FROM SRV OFFICIALS THAT THE SRV WAS UNABLE TO RECEIVE THEM AT THIS TIME; AND THE TRIP HAS NOW APPARENTLY BEEN INDEFINITELY POSTPONED.

3. VIETNAM

A. POSSIBLE MOVEMENT ON OVERFLIGHT AGREEMENT (LOU)

ACCORDING TO AFP HONG KONG, PROSPECTS FOR AN OVERFLIGHT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SRV AND THAILAND HAVE IMPROVED WITH VIETNAM'S APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION (ICAO) WHICH SETS STANDARD RATES PAYABLE FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF OVERFLIGHT. THE ROUTE ("AMBER ONE"), BETWEEN HONG KONG AND BANGKOK WOULD SAVE AN HOUR'S FLYING TIME COMPARED TO THE CIRCUITOUS ROUTE USED BY ALL AIRLINES SINCE THE EVENTS OF APRIL 1975. THE MAIN OBSTACLE TO AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SRV AND THEREAFTER WITH ALL OTHER AIRLINES SERVING THE AREA HAS
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PAGE 04 STATE 201583

BEEN THE EXORBITANT OVERFLIGHT FEES VIETNAM SOUGHT. THE THAI GOVERNMENT IS REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD THE SRV THAT IT WISHES TO OPEN NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD AN AGREEMENT AND IS PREPARED TO SEND A MISSION TO HANOI.

B. DONATIONS WELCOME (UNCL)

SAIGON'S OFFICIAL MEDIA HAVE EXHORTED THE PEOPLE TO MAINTAIN THEIR SENTIMENTAL TIES WITH RELATIVES ABROAD AND TO ASK THEM TO SEND MONEY. THESE WHO RECEIVE SUCH REMITTANCES WILL GET A PREMIUM EXCHANGE RATE OF FROM 25 TO 70 PERCENT DEPENDING ON THE KIND OF CURRENCY. THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE THUS GENERATED WILL BE USED TO DEVELOP PRODUCTION AND INDUSTRIALIZE THE COUNTRY, ACCORDING TO THE SAIGON OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER RADIO. CHRISTOPHER

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